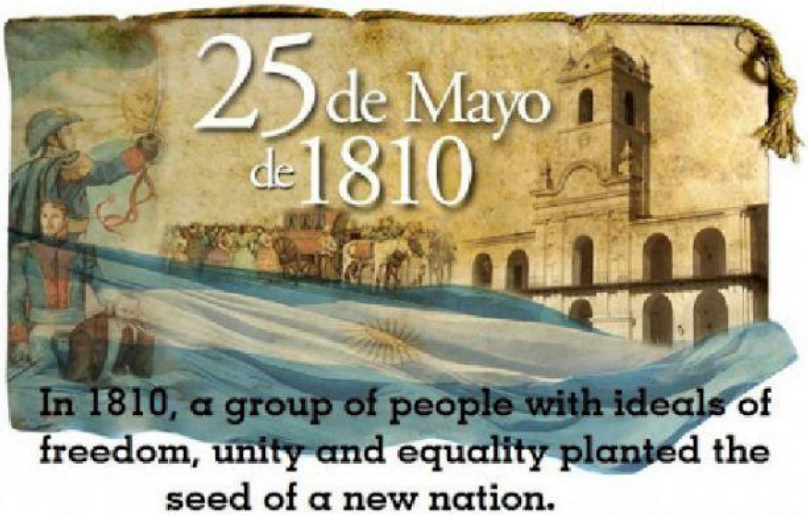

Read the following text.

The **May Revolution** happened from May 18 to 25, 1810, in Buenos Aires. Buenos Aires was the capital of the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata. It was a Spanish colony that included the territories of present-day Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay. The result was the removal of Viceroy Baltasar Hidalgo de Cisneros and the formation of a local government now called the "Primera Junta". In Argentina this is now celebrated as "May Week" (Spanish; Semana de Mayo).

The May Revolution began the Argentine War of Independence. No formal declaration of independence was made. The Primera Junta continued to govern in the name of the deposed king, Ferdinand VII. The Argentine Declaration of Independence was made at the Congress of Tucumán on July 9, 1816.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

The **Primera Junta** or **First Assembly** is the most common name given to the first independent government of Argentina. It was created on 25 May 1810, as a result of the events of the May Revolution. The Junta initially had representatives from only Buenos Aires. When it was expanded with the addition of the representatives from the other cities of the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata, it became popularly known instead as the **Junta Grande** (Grand Council). The Junta operated at El Fuerte (the fort, where the modern Casa Rosada stands), which had been used since 1776 as a residence by the Viceroys.

The Open cabildo of 22 May decided to replace the viceroy with a Junta. The politically active inhabitants of Buenos Aires saw no better moment than this to establish a local government. They had been influenced by the recent democratic and republican philosophical wave, and were also concerned about the commercial monopoly exerted by the Spanish crown, which was suffocating the local economy. Historically Buenos Aires province had partially mitigated this problem through contraband. Local politicians who wanted a change towards self-government and free commerce, argued that the King being imprisoned, sovereignty had returned to the people. The people were to assume the government until the King returned.

The meeting of a Buenos Aires cabildo abierto (an extraordinary meeting of the municipal council with assistance of over 200 people from government, during 22 May 1810, came under strong pressure from the militias and a crowd that formed in front of the cabildo hall on the Plaza Mayor (today the Plaza de Mayo), up to 25 May. The crowd favored the local politicians, and the cabildo ended up creating the Primera Junta, the first form of local government in the territory that would later become Argentina.
In general the principles of the May Revolution were popular sovereignty, the principle of representation and federalization, division of powers, the maintenance of the mandates, and publication of the government's actions.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Choose the most relevant option.

A. The May Revolution took place between

18th and 22nd May, 1816

18th and 25th May, 1810

May 22nd and 25th May, 1810

A. Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata was a Spanish colony that included ...

4 present day countries

all South American territory

all the Argentinian territory

C. People wanted ....

free commerce and self-government

independence

to share decisions with the Spanish

D. They gathered at Cabildo Abierto in order to....

imprison the Spanish King

form a local government

declare war against the Spanish

E. They decided to gather and make decisions because...

the King of Spain was imprisoned

they were tired

they were angry

LIVEWORKSHEETS

F. The Junta Grande or Grand Council included...

all representatives of all the colony

representatives of Buenos Aires

representatives of all the provinces

G. Politicians were helped and encouraged by...

other countries

the milicia and town people

Spanish rebels

H. The result of the May Revolution was...

the formation of a first local government

independence from the Spanish

free commerce

LIVEWORKSHEETS

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1. Why was there a revolution in May 1810?
2. What was the result of the May Revolution? Mention two results.
3. Why did the Argentinians want to take over power? Mention two reasons.
4. Which was the result of the meeting on 25th May?
5. Mention 4 principles of the Primera Junta.

LIVEWORKSHEETS